



**Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller**  
**Remarks**  
**at the Transit Center Vendors Seminar**  
**Hotel Hyatt, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic**

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I am pleased to be here today because this conference is aimed at broadening our partnership with the citizens of Kyrgyzstan. The goal today is to provide detailed, concrete information on how local companies can take full advantage of U.S. government contracts. Several Kyrgyz companies are already working with the Transit Center, and it is my hope and expectation that this conference will help others too.

As you know, the mission of the International Transit Center at Manas is to transfer supplies to support the international effort to fight terrorists in Afghanistan. This is a critical goal not just for the people of Afghanistan, but for the region and for the entire international community.

We greatly value the role that Kyrgyzstan has taken in supporting regional security.

Our partnership with the people of Kyrgyzstan is broad, including not only security, but also a full range of issues from education to economic development to governance.

The Transit Center has demonstrated its commitment to this partnership by working with the local community to provide assistance to those in need. For example, earlier this year I participated in the opening of a school, the Birdik School, that was fully renovated with support of the Transit Center. Thanks to the renovation, the students now have a building that allows them to focus on learning.

At today's conference, the focus is on business partnerships. The basis of the free market is fair competition between businesses. Today's speakers will provide you with the information you need to be able to compete on an equal basis for U.S. government contracts. This helps your businesses, while also helping the U.S. government obtain the best quality and price for these contracts. Over the past year I have had the opportunity to sample Kyrgyz food and crafts and to use many Kyrgyz products and services. I have no doubt that our military will find many advantages buying Kyrgyz. Both sides of the transaction will benefit – and that is the core of the free market system.

I look forward to seeing your companies doing business with the U.S. government and enjoying the benefits of a mutually profitable relationship.